

REMARKS

Claims 7-12 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 7 is amended to clarify the order of the steps as set forth in the original Japanese language PCT application. Such amendment is not to overcome any applied art, but only for sake of clarity and consistency. Support for these features may be found at least at page 4, lines 5-14 of the specification. Thus, no new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Applicants gratefully appreciate the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative by Examiner El-Arini during the September 13 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

I. Claim for Priority

Applicants made a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. §119(a)-(d) or (f) in the form PTO-1390 "Transmittal Letter to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) Concerning a Filing Under 35 U.S.C. §371." Certified copies of the priority document were filed in the International Bureau. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner acknowledge that all copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage Application from the International Bureau under PCT Rule 17.2(a).

II. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and §103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 7 and 10-12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Japanese Patent Publication No. JP-A-406322162 to Ezure et al. ("Ezure") and rejects claims 8, 9, 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ezure in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,084,075 to Doan et al. ("Doan"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

As discussed in the personal interview, Ezure does not disclose, teach or suggest a die cleaning method for removing a forming-material from a die including "removing a part or all

of the binder contained in the forming-material from the die, and removing the forming-material from the die after removing a part or all of the binder," as recited in independent claim 7.

The Office Action alleges that Ezure discloses a die cleaning method by spraying a molding to clean the molding, citing the English Abstract. Although the Office Action does not specifically identify the features that allegedly correspond to a die and the features that allegedly correspond to a binder, the Office Action appears to allege that the molding of Ezure corresponds to a die. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Ezure teaches a method of cleaning a molding made of a polyolefinic resin, which includes a homopolymer of ethylene, propylene or butene-1 or a copolymer. See English Abstract/Constitution. The molding may also include fillers such as carbonate, talc or clay. See Abstract. The molding including such material may then be molded by injection molding, extrusion, blown film extrusion or T-die molding. See English Abstract/Constitution. Therefore, the molding of Ezure corresponds to material that is molded, e.g., a forming-material or a formed object, not a mold or a die used to form the molding.

Ezure also teaches that the molding is sprayed with water or stream by using a high-pressure cleaner to clean the molding without after-treatment. See English Abstract/Constitution. Thus, Ezure only teaches cleaning the molding, i.e., the formed object, after the molding has been formed. Ezure does not even mention any process of cleaning a mold or a die used to form the molding. Therefore, Ezure cannot be reasonably considered to disclose, teach or suggest a die cleaning method as recited in claim 7.

The Office Action asserts that Doan remedies certain deficiencies of Ezure. Notwithstanding this assertion, Doan does not remedy the deficiencies of Ezure discussed above.

As discussed in the personal interview, Doan is directed to a die cleaning method using a body of wax 12 to remove dough from orifices 11 of a die plate 10. See Figs. 1-5. Because Doan does not teach or suggest removing a part or all of a binder contained in the dough from the die plate 10, Ezure and Doan do not teach or suggest, alone or in permissible combination, the die cleaning method of claim 7.

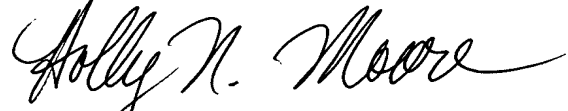
Therefore, claim 7 is patentable over Ezure and would not have been rendered obvious by Ezure and Doan. Claims 8-12 depend from claim 7, and thus also would not have been rendered obvious by Ezure and Doan for at least the reasons set forth above, as well as the additional features they recite. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 7-12 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: September 16, 2005

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